

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C., 20520

July 18, 2024

Dear Secretary Blinken:

We, the undersigned, represent civil society groups and human rights advocates from across the world. July 20, 2024 marks 25 years since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) launched a systematic and brutal campaign to “eradicate” Falun Gong. We strongly condemn this persecution and are writing to urge concrete action from the Biden Administration in advance of this tragic anniversary.

As you know, Falun Gong (a.k.a. Falun Dafa) is a spiritual and meditation practice based on the principles of Truthfulness, Compassion, and Forbearance. Since 1999, millions of Falun Gong practitioners in China have been harassed, arbitrarily detained, or jailed without due process. Many have been tortured and even killed, including from forced organ harvesting. As of June 2024, the total number of documented deaths reached 5,088, as recorded by Minghui.org. The actual number of those killed for practicing Falun Gong is believed to be much larger.

These atrocities have been well-documented by human rights organizations, governmental bodies, and the United Nations. A 2013 Amnesty International report noted that Falun Gong practitioners constituted from one third to 100 percent of the population in certain labor camps. A 2017 Freedom House report found that “Falun Gong practitioners across China are subject to widespread surveillance, arbitrary detention, imprisonment, and torture, and they are at a high risk of extrajudicial execution.” The China chapter in the latest edition of the U.S. State Department’s Report on International Religious Freedom published on June 26, 2024 makes dozens of references to human rights violations suffered by Falun Gong believers, including large-scale detentions, imprisonment, torture, digital surveillance, deaths in custody, and organ transplant abuses.

In 2019, an Independent Tribunal in the United Kingdom, chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice KC, concluded that “forced organ harvesting has been committed for years throughout China on a significant scale and that Falun Gong practitioners have been one—and probably the main—source of organ supply.” In 2021, twelve United Nations human rights experts jointly

stated that they “were extremely alarmed” by allegations of organ harvesting targeting Falun Gong practitioners and other minorities in China.

The regime’s persecution of Falun Gong has also extended into the United States. As early as 2003, Congress adopted House Concurrent Resolution 304 that outlined numerous attacks on overseas Falun Gong practitioners and called on the Chinese government to “immediately stop interfering in the exercise of religious and political freedoms within the United States.” More recently, reports published since 2021 by Freedom House and Safeguard Defenders have included incidents of CCP-linked individuals harassing, intimidating, or physically attacking Falun Gong practitioners outside of China, including in the United States.

The U.S. government in recent years has taken some important steps in response to these violations. In 2021 and 2022 Secretary Blinken announced sanctions imposed on two Chinese officials for violations of the human rights of Falun Gong practitioners in China. The Department of Justice has indicted several CCP agents for engaging in transnational repression targeting Falun Gong practitioners in the United States. On June 25, 2024 the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Falun Gong Protection Act, H.R. 4132.

Such actions are welcome, but more must be done to incentivize Chinese officials at all levels to refrain from engaging in human rights violations targeting Falun Gong practitioners in China and the United States. As such, we urge the Biden Administration to:

- **Issue a formal statement ahead of July 20th** that acknowledges this tragic anniversary and the harm it has done to the Chinese people and U.S.-China relations; condemns the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, their families, and their supporters in China, as well as transnational repression targeting believers in the United States; and calls on the CCP to end its ban on the practice and immediately release Falun Gong prisoners of conscience.
- **Announce a new round of sanctions targeting Chinese officials** or entities responsible for severe human rights violations committed against Falun Gong practitioners, especially those from Northeastern China where repression is typically most brutal and severe.
- **Work with the Senate to introduce and adopt a companion bill to the Falun Gong Protection Act (H.R. 4132)** recently passed by the House of Representatives.

Thank you for your attention and support.

Signed by (in alphabetical order)

Alan Adler, Executive Director, Friends of Falun Gong

Levi Browde, Executive Director, Falun Dafa InfoCenter

Anh Cao - President of Falun Dafa Club at Harvard Griffin GSAS

Sarah Cook, Independent researcher

Anders Corr (Ph.D.), Founder of the Journal of Political Risk

Tenzin Dawa, Executive Director, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy

Emily Huang, President, Students for Falun Gong

Susie Hughes, Executive Director, International Coalition to End Transplant Abuse in China (ETAC)

Omer Kanat, Executive Director, Uyghur Human Rights Project

Shantao Lai(Ph.D.), President of the Falun Dafa Association of Washington DC

Terri Marsh, Executive Director, Human Rights Law Foundation

Eric Patterson, President & CEO, Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation

Marco Respinti, Director-in-Charge, Bitter Winter

Nicolas Strömbäck, Senior Group Compliance, Ikano Bank

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Frank Wolf, Member of Congress, Virginia, 1981-2015 (retired)

Yi Zhongyuan (Rong Yi), President of Global Service Center for Quitting the Chinese Communist Party